



## **(U) Hostage Support -- Another Success Story**

FROM: (S//SI) [REDACTED]  
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*Pictured at left: French hostages Christian Chesnot (left) and Georges Malbrunot speak in a videotape aired on Arabic television station Al Jazeera, August 20, 2004 (Reuters) (U)*

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(S//SI) The November Foreign Affairs Digest ran an article entitled "Hostage Support," (see [link to article](#)) in which they recounted the fact that Direction Generale de la Securite Exterieur (DGSE), our French SIGINT partner, had sent a driver to the American embassy in Paris with an extremely urgent message for DIRNSA just a few days after two French journalists were taken hostage in Iraq. Our SIGINT Liaison Officer (SLO) in Paris received the message on DIRNSA's behalf, and set things in motion - the French had requested NSA's help and support in identifying and locating the kidnappers.

(S//SI) On December 23, SLO Paris sent the following note to her FAD chain of command. (Note that the hostages had been released on December 21 and were back in France on December 22).

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*(S//SI) I made the mistake of stopping by the office today on my way to the gym at the Embassy. As I entered my office to pick up my towel, the phone was ringing off the hook. It was Director General Brochand's office calling to say that an urgent message for General Hayden from Mr. Brochand was being dispatched by motorcycle to me. I waited in my office (this being France this meant a few hours!) and finally the motorcycle messenger from DGSE arrived.*

*(S//SI) Now, DGSE could have faxed this note or sent it via the bilateral line, however, sending such a message in this manner obviously has a much higher value from a diplomatic standpoint and is considered by the French to be very important. (We Americans would consider this wasting time.) So it was with great fanfare and importance that the following message was received. I have faxed this letter to FAD for formal transmission to General Hayden.*

*Text of Letter:*

*Dear Michael,  
After the release of our hostages in Iraq, I would like to express my gratitude to you personally and to your collaborators for the assistance NSA provided to DGSE through the whole crisis. It helped us to improved our understanding of the situation and make the right decision, in an extremely difficult context. Thank you again and my best wishes to you, your family, and your staff on this Christmas' eve.  
Yours sincerely, Pierre.*

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[REDACTED]  
*(U) French journalist Georges Malbrunot (R)  
after landing at Villacoublay military airbase,  
near Paris, December 22, 2004 (Reuters)*

[REDACTED]  
*(U) Christian Chesnot at Villacoublay, freed  
after being held hostage for more than four  
months by Islamic militants in Iraq (Reuters)*

(U//FOUO) This article was reprinted from the January *Foreign Affairs Digest*.

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